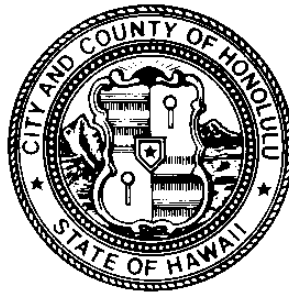


**GENERAL SAFETY
TAILGATE LESSON PLAN**

Office Safety



CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
Division of Industrial Safety and Workers' Compensation

OFFICE SAFETY

WHY BOTHER WITH OFFICE SAFETY, AREN'T ALL OFFICES SAFE?

FACT: The risk of injury to office workers is much lower than to industrial (blue collar) workers. Because of this, office risks often go unrecognized, yet they could lead to serious personal injury or an office disaster. **COMPLACENCY** – The attitude that office accidents do not amount to much – is one of the prime causes of office accidents. The average office worker gives little thought to safety because office work is not perceived as hazardous, and no accidents have occurred in years.

But, office accidents do happen. Do you know any office workers who have been injured? How many times have you had a “close call?”

Offices can be safe! But only if you make safety your business. Every worker must be willing to adopt safe work procedures. Office supervisors must understand the nature of office hazards and unsafe practices and take measures to reduce or eliminate these hazards.

ACCIDENTS ARE COSTLY. CONSIDER THE PRICE:

DISCOMFORT AND PAIN – from bumps, bruises and cuts, to more serious injuries like back strain and electrical shock.

DISRUPTIONS – in work schedules, vacations plans and in family and social life.

DOLLARS – including medical bills, lost wages and insurance costs.

TYPES OF ACCIDENTS COMMON TO OFFICE WORKERS

FALLS

Falls are by far the most common and account for 34% of office accidents. Strains follow, making up approximately 22% of office accidents. Struck by or striking against make up 18%, while caught in or between objects make up 10%. Prevention of these and other accidents that commonly occur in an office setting is discussed below.

FLOOR SURFACES

Watch out for recently waxed floors, also loose carpeting, floorboards and tiles.

WET FLOORS

Wipe up spills immediately.

Wear appropriate shoes.

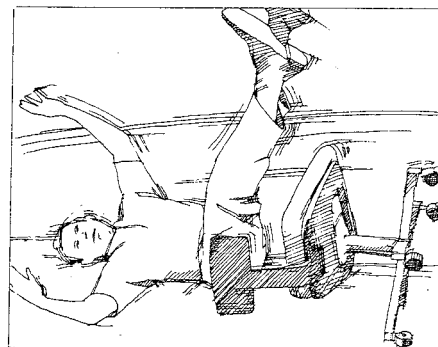
Pickup pencils, paper clips and other objects that may cause a slip.

CHAIRS

Keep all four legs of your chair on the floor. Tilting back in a chair often results in over balancing and a fall.

Routinely inspect chairs that tilt for broken springs, loose screws and defective welds.

Be sure-footed when climbing – do not use chairs for climbing, use a stepladder and climb cautiously.



CORDS

Beware of telephone and electrical cords lying across the floor. Catching your shoes on a cord frequently results in a fall.

Offer suggestions for different furniture layouts that might resolve the problems where cords are potential hazards.

STAIRWAYS AND WALKWAYS

On stairways, use handrails and take one step at a time. **DON'T RUN!** Report worn treads and broken or loose stairs to your supervisor.

Avoid obstructing your vision with large loads. Don't hurry, especially around corners.

Don't store boxes, supplies, etc., where people might trip.

Walk (**DON'T RUN**) to and from the building. Slippery roads and sidewalks are especially hazardous, so walk carefully. Always watch where you are going.

LIGHTING

Use as much light as you need to get the job done safely and correctly.

Report dusty or out-of-order lights promptly.

DOORS, DRAWERS AND MORE

DOORS

Check for markings in the center of glass doors and panels to prevent walking into them.

Approach solid doors from the side away from the hinges. This will enable you to step out of the way if someone comes through.

FILING CABINETS

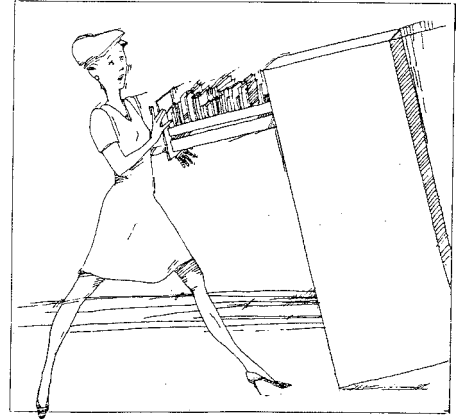
Fill bottom file cabinet drawers first to prevent the cabinet from tipping.

Avoid overloading top drawers. Overloading can cause the cabinet to fall on you.

Close one drawer before opening another to avoid banging your head and to prevent the cabinet from tipping.

Close drawers gently. Use handles to avoid pinching fingers.

Don't struggle with stuck drawers. You might hurt your back.



SHELVES AND STORAGE CABINETS

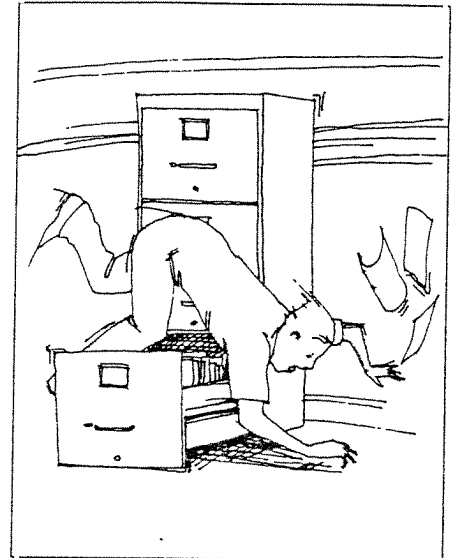
Stack objects neatly inside cabinets, not on top.

Keep frequently used items within easy reach.

Don't overload cabinets, especially those that aren't bolted to the floor or wall. They could tip over.

Store heavy or breakable items on lower shelves.

Store solvents and other chemicals on lower shelves.



GOOD HOUSEKEEPING MAKES GOOD SENSE

To prevent cuts and puncture wounds, keep everything in its place and handle materials properly.

Pointed objects – keep them boxed separately in a drawer. Never reach for them blindly.

Staplers – Do not test or work on a jammed stapler by holding your thumb over the end, or by discharging it near your eyes.

Razor blades – store in a covered container. To dispose of them, wrap them in paper and mark the paper.

Envelopes and papers – wear finger guards when handling stacks of paper. Moisten stamps and envelopes with a sponge or sealing device.

Pushpins and tacks – use separate containers for storage. Never mix pushpins with paper clips.

Broken glass – use a broom and dustpan, not your fingers, to pick up glass. Wrap broken glass in paper and mark the paper. Pick up splinters with a damp towel. Discard immediately.

Paper cutters – always make sure the guard is in place. Keep fingers away from the blade. Avoid cutting too many sheets at one time. Keep the blade in the closed position when the cutter is not in use.

OFFICE MACHINES

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Learn how to operate machines safely before you use them.

Be alert for electrical hazards such as frayed or bare wires, overloaded outlets or improperly grounded wires. Unplug any machine that overheats, smokes, sparks or causes shocks and report the problem immediately.

Turn off and unplug machines before adjusting or repairing them.

Avoid wearing loose sleeves, scarves, belts, dangling jewelry, or other loose items around machines with exposed or unguarded moving parts.

TIPS FOR COPIER USE

Avoid physical contact with toners or other chemicals. If you must add toner, wear rubber gloves and a smock if possible. Wash hands and face when you're finished.

Keep the document cover down during copying, if possible.

VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINALS (VDTs) OR COMPUTER MONITORS

Minimize eyestrain – prevent glare. To accomplish this, you can adjust the angle of the screen, change the viewing distance, alter the lighting by adjusting drapes or blinds and adjust the brightness control as necessary. Keep the screen clean.

Alternate screen work with other (non-screen) work. A good work routine is to get away from the screen every hour or so to do other work such as filing, delivering material, etc.

Practice good posture – keep your back straight, thighs supported, and feet flat on the floor or on a footrest to avoid discomfort. You may need to adjust the height of your chair or the height of the keyboard, as necessary.

Document holder

Same height and distance from the user as the screen

Backrest

Support lower back

Screen

Slightly below eye level

Keyboard

Positioned to allow straight hand-forearm

Desk or tabletop

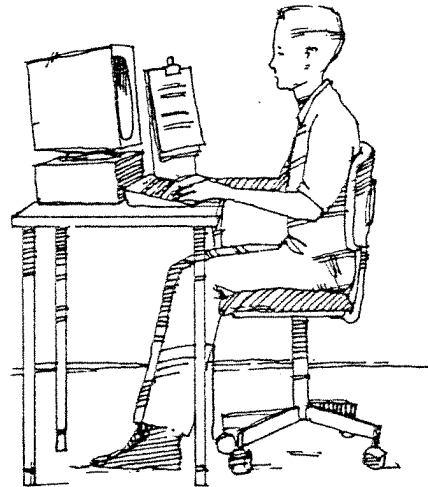
Thin work surface to allow leg room and posture adjustments

Feet

Rest comfortably on floor or footrest

Seat Height and angle

Allow comfortable posture



MAINTAIN GOOD POSTURE

Sit up straight and well back in your chair.

Try to keep your neck and back in a straight line. Remember, your back is supporting your upper body (60% of your body weight).

Keep your feet flat on the floor or a footrest to relieve pressure on your thighs.

Support your thighs on the chair, keeping them parallel to the floor.

GIVE YOUR BACK ALL THE SUPPORT IT NEEDS

LIFT AND CARRY SAFELY

Know the weight of the object before attempting to lift it.

Stand close to the object with feet spread apart for balance.

Do not twist your body to get into position.

Squat down, keeping your back straight and your knees bent.

Grasp the object firmly.

Lift with your legs, slowly straightening them. Then return your back to a vertical position.

Hold the object firmly and as close to your body as possible when you carry it.

